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The situation in the Middle East

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 1 August 2002 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am writing to inform you of the latest horrific attack perpetrated in the ongoing campaign of Palestinian terrorism directed against Israel.

During lunchtime yesterday, a bomb exploded in a crowded cafeteria at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The blast killed 7 people and injured 86 others, at least 14 seriously. Four of those killed were American nationals and one was a dual French and American national, while most of the injured were local and foreign university students between the ages of 18 and 30. The explosion ripped through the cafeteria, causing part of the ceiling to collapse. Witnesses described horrendous scenes with tens of people lying on the ground wailing in pain, covered in blood, with clothes and flesh torn apart. The terrorist organization Hamas rushed to claim responsibility for the attack, declaring that it was "part of a series of responses that will take a long time and teach all Israelis" and staged celebratory processions in Gaza City and Shechem (Nablus).

The fact that this organization would deliberately target an institution of higher learning attended by students from around the world, and a place where Jewish and Arab students mix freely and study together, is testimony to the depravity of Hamas and its utter disregard for the sanctity of human life. Indeed, Hamas and other terrorist groups operating in Palestinian Authority territory continue to show no more concern for the civilians they use to hide amongst than they do for those they deliberately target for murder.

In other terrorist incidents, the bound body of a 27-year-old Israeli man who had been shot in the head at zero range was found today in the Gashuri industrial zone, near Tulkarm. Marks on the victim's neck indicted that he had been hanged before being shot. According to assessments by security officials, the perpetrators had taken advantage of the removal of the restrictions on movement that had been imposed by Israel in Tulkarm in the wake of recent terrorist attacks, so as to commit

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the killing and then escape back into Palestinian Authority territory. In addition, yesterday, Israeli security forces discovered an explosives laboratory, including over 300 kg of TATP explosives, housed, of all places, in the Palestinian Legislative Council building of the Palestinian Authority in Jenin.

While rogue States such as Syria, Iran and Iraq continue to praise and support despicable acts of murder by Palestinian terrorists, responsible members of the international community have condemned these terrorist attacks against innocent civilians and called on the Palestinian Authority to, once and for all, live up to its signed commitments to root out terrorism in its territory, consistent with the global campaign against terrorism, international law and Security Council resolution 1373 (2001).

However, the Palestinian Authority, while paying lip-service to the fight against terrorism to appease international public opinion, has steadfastly refused to take even minimal measures to bring an end to the terror, to confiscate illegal weapons and to cease incitement to hatred and violence, in clear violation of its legal commitments as well as Security Council resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002).

On the contrary, the Palestinian leadership continues to condone and support such massacres. Hamas, an organization internationally recognized as a terrorist group which is committed to Israel's destruction, has for years been treated by the Palestinian Authority as a legitimate partner and ally. The Palestinian leadership has given the organization free rein in Palestinian Authority territory and its operatives, responsible for the deaths of hundreds of innocent civilians, are assured safe harbour and free movement by Palestinian security forces.

In the light of the refusal of the Palestinian Authority, and its 40,000-strong security force, to take the necessary measures against such terrorist groups, Israel is compelled to conduct defensive operations so as to protect its citizens. We call on the international community to denounce not only the acts of terrorism perpetrated by Palestinian groups, but also the continued support and criminal involvement of the current Palestinian leadership in such acts and their refusal to prevent such atrocities, for which they must be held fully accountable. Only an end to the campaign of Palestinian terrorism, with its terrible cost in Israeli and Palestinian lives, can ensure that the hope for a future of security, peace and dignity for both peoples will be restored.

I submit this letter in follow-up to numerous letters detailing the campaign of Palestinian terrorism that began in September 2000.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 42, as well as under agenda item 166, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Aaron **Jacob**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.